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Supporting new teachers

- In many countries, less experienced teachers (those with less than five years' teaching experience) are more likely to work in challenging schools and less likely to report confidence in their teaching abilities than more experienced teachers.
- Most countries have activities in place aimed at preparing teachers for work, such as induction and mentoring programmes.
- Approximately 44% of teachers work in schools where principals report that all new teachers have access to formal induction programmes; 76% work in schools with access to informal induction; and 22% work in schools that only have programmes for teachers new to teaching.
- Fewer teachers report participation in induction and mentoring programmes than principals report the existence of such programmes.

What is TALIS?

TALIS (Teaching and Learning International Survey) is the first international survey examining teaching and learning environments in schools. It asks teachers and school principals about their work, their schools and their classrooms. This cross-country analysis helps countries identify others facing similar challenges and learn about their policies.

TALIS 2013 focused on lower secondary education teachers and their principals. It sampled 200 schools in more than 30 countries and 20 teachers in each school.

More information available at www.oecd.org/talis

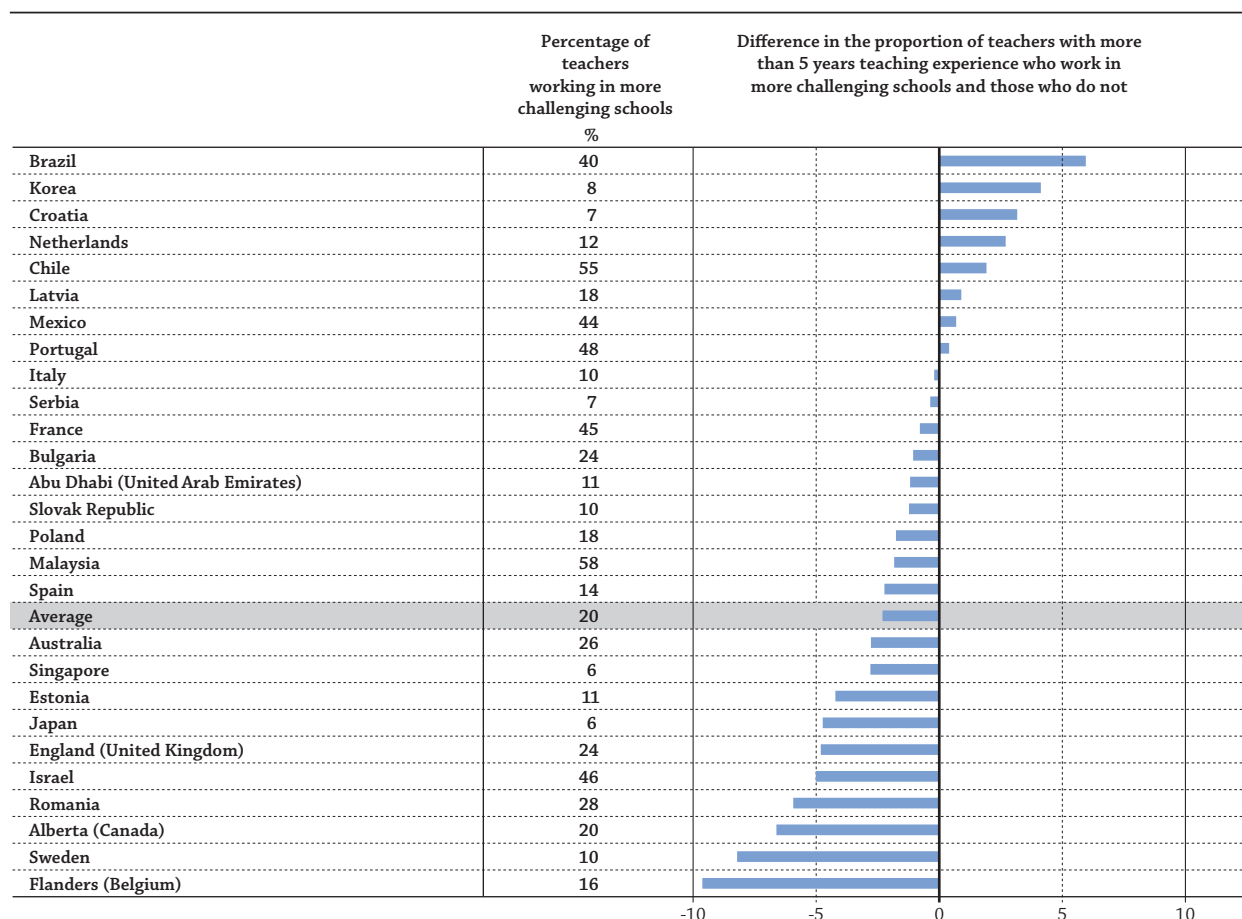
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Challenges facing new teachers

TALIS 2008 (OECD, 2012) illustrated many of the challenges facing new teachers, such as struggling to keep order in the classroom. TALIS 2013 extends the understanding of new teachers' working environments by examining how new and more experienced teachers are allocated to challenging schools. Indeed, it could be expected that education systems would try to make the most out of their human resources, by allocating their most experienced teachers to the most challenging schools. Yet, the TALIS data suggests that the opposite can be observed. In most TALIS countries, it is more likely that new (i.e. those with five years' experience or less) rather than experienced teachers will teach in schools where over 30% of students come from socially disadvantaged homes (Figure 1); where at least 10% of students have special needs; and where at least 10% are children whose first language is different than the language of instruction.



Figure 1 • **Difference between more experienced and new teachers teaching in schools with at least 30% students coming from socially disadvantaged homes**



Note: Positive scores indicate a higher proportion of more experienced teachers in a challenging school.

Source: OECD, TALIS 2013 Database.

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Moreover, across TALIS countries, teachers with less than five years' experience are more likely than experienced teachers to teach in rural areas, where schools often have fewer resources. TALIS shows that teachers' self-efficacy generally increases over time. Although new teachers tend to be less confident in their teaching abilities than their more experienced colleagues, they often face more challenging work environments. Experience takes time to accumulate, but confidence can be boosted through participation in professional development, such as induction programmes and mentoring.

What this means in practice

In many countries there is an inequitable distribution of (in)experienced teachers in schools that may be more challenging in terms of their student composition and location (urban vs. rural areas). At the same time, teachers' confidence in their abilities tends to be the lowest at the beginning of their careers. This mixture of low confidence and highly challenging environments, with few experienced colleagues to seek support from, can increase the likelihood of new teachers leaving the profession. To avoid this loss in human capital, countries should aim for a more balanced allocation of teachers according to schools' needs, and provide extra support for new teachers.

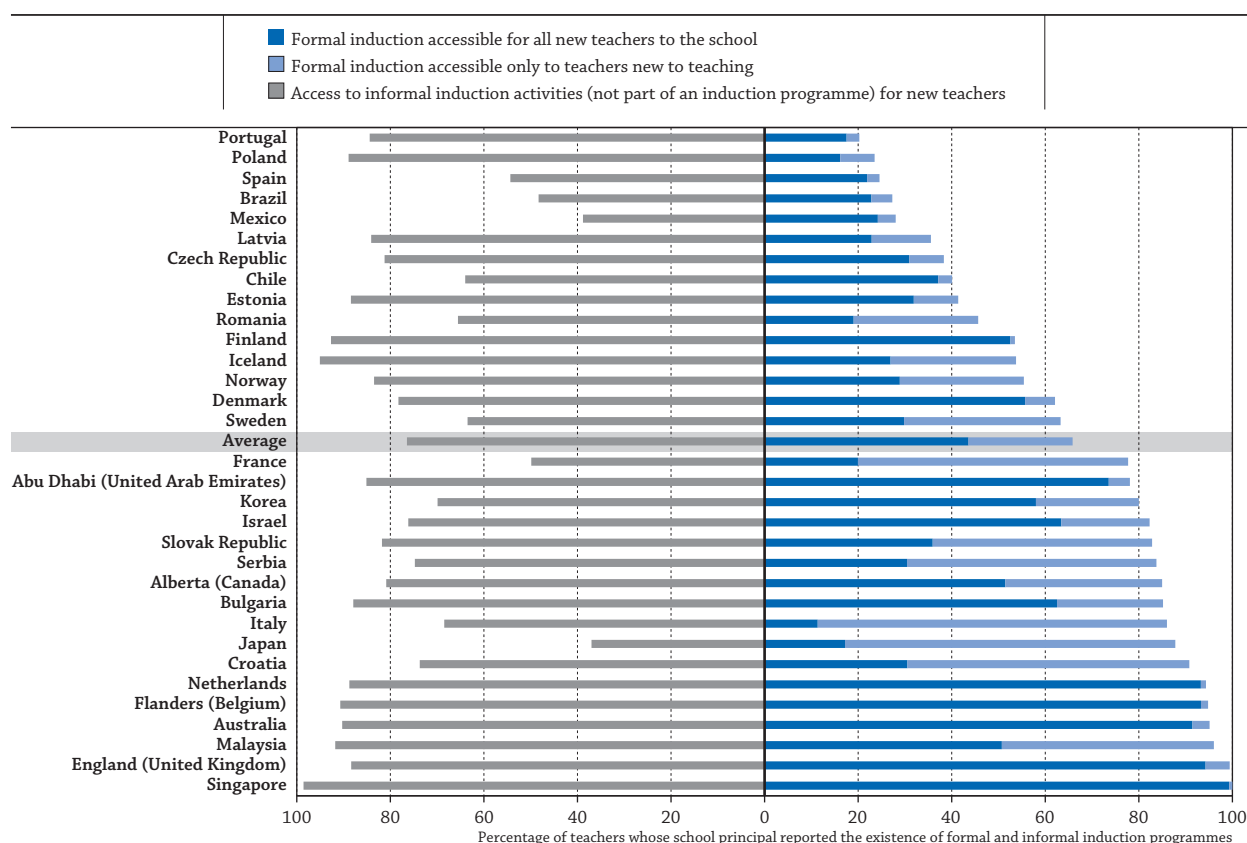


Availability of support programmes for new teachers

Induction programmes are completed during a teacher's first regular teaching position and can be formal or informal in nature (OECD, 2014a). These activities can help link pre-service teacher training to the reality of day-to-day work in the classroom.

Access to induction programmes varies. As Figure 2 shows, 44% of teachers work in schools where principals report that formal induction programmes are available for all new teachers; 22% work in schools where formal induction programmes are only available for teachers new to teaching; and 76% of teachers work in schools that have informal induction programmes. In Brazil, Mexico, Poland, Portugal and Spain, between 70% and 80% of teachers have no access to formal induction programmes. In Japan and Mexico, about 60% of teachers have no access to informal induction programmes.

Figure 2 • Access to formal and informal induction programmes



Source: OECD, TALIS 2013 Database.

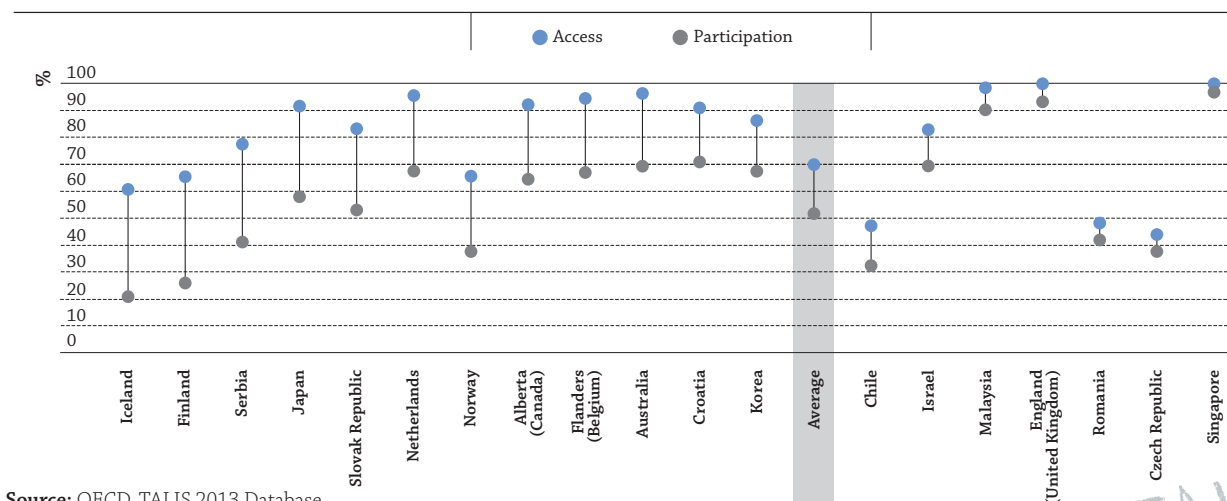
New teachers can be supported through being paired with more experienced colleagues, often called mentors. Across TALIS countries, approximately 75% of teachers work in schools where principals report the existence of a mentoring programme. However, there are large differences between countries in terms of whether these programmes are offered only to teachers who are new to teaching, to teachers new to the school, or to all teachers.

Participation in support programmes for new teachers

In most TALIS countries, teachers report lower participation rates in induction programmes than principals report access to these programmes. As Figure 3 shows, 70% of teachers with less than 3 years' experience work in schools where principals report access to induction programmes, however only about 50% report participating in such programmes.



Figure 3 • **Access and participation in formal induction programmes for teachers with less than 3 years' experience**



Source: OECD, TALIS 2013 Database.

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For many countries, participation in mentoring programmes is also lower than access, partly because not every teacher will have a mentor and some may serve as mentors themselves. However, even when taking this into account the difference between access and participation is considerable in some countries. For example, in the Netherlands, 71% of all teachers work in schools with reported mentoring programmes, while only 17% report having a mentor.

What this means in practice

Access to induction and mentoring programmes provides support for new teachers, but participation in these support schemes seems insufficient in many countries. Systems with a mismatch between access and participation should investigate the barriers that new teachers face in participating in induction or mentoring programmes.

These activities are not only an investment in new teachers, but feed back into the system: TALIS shows that teachers who participate in induction programmes are more likely to become mentors and take part in professional development later in their careers.

The bottom line New teachers often face the same, if not more challenging, working environments as more experienced teachers; however, they often lack the professional experience and confidence to easily handle these challenges. Education systems should review their policies for allocating teachers to the more challenging schools, as well as invest in extending access to professional support for new teachers through induction programmes and mentoring activities. Attention also needs to be paid to maximising the participation in such programmes by eliminating barriers and creating incentives for participation.

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To learn more

OECD (2014a), *TALIS 2013 Results: An International Perspective on Teaching and Learning*, TALIS, OECD Publishing, Paris.
OECD (2014b), *A Teachers' Guide to TALIS 2013*, TALIS, OECD Publishing, Paris.
OECD (2012), *The experience of new teachers: Results from TALIS 2008*, TALIS, OECD Publishing, Paris.

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